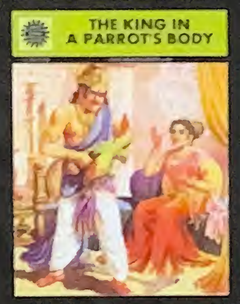
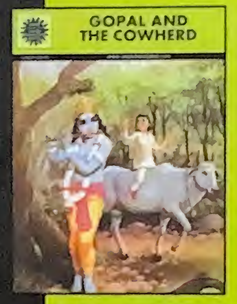
THE GREEN DEMON

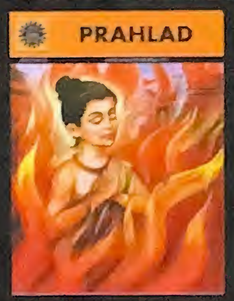
A young man wanders into a village to find that pandemonium prevails among the men working in the fields because of a demon! His curiosity aroused, the man asks about the demon and is amused to realise that the demon is merely a watermelon.
When he tries to prove this to the disbelieving men, they turn on him, accusing him of being more wicked than a demon.
This collection of Sufi tales mines human superstition and foolishness for a wise and richly comic look at the world around us. Sufism is a branch of Islam that seeks to discover the inner mystical aspects of religion. A Sufi teacher teaches his student not what to learn but how to learn, by examining himself and his fellow human beings.

OTHER ACK FABLES & HUMOUR:



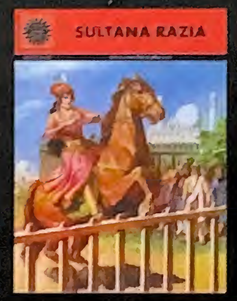


ALSO LOOK FOR:

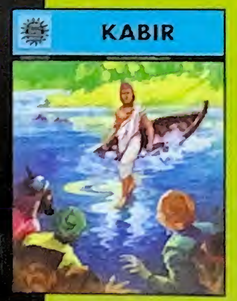


EPICS & MYTHOLOGY

INDIAN CLASSICS



BRAVEHEARTS



VISIONARIES

Buy online at www.amarchitrakatha.com

"Amar Chitra Kathas are a glorious tribute to India's rich cultural heritage. These books have been an integral part of my children's early years, as they have been for many other families across India. Comics are a great way of reaching out to children, inculcating reading habits and driving their quest to learn more about our roots."

– NARAYAN MURTHY, CHIEF MENTOR, INFOSYS

ISBN 81-8482-507-2

9 788184 825077

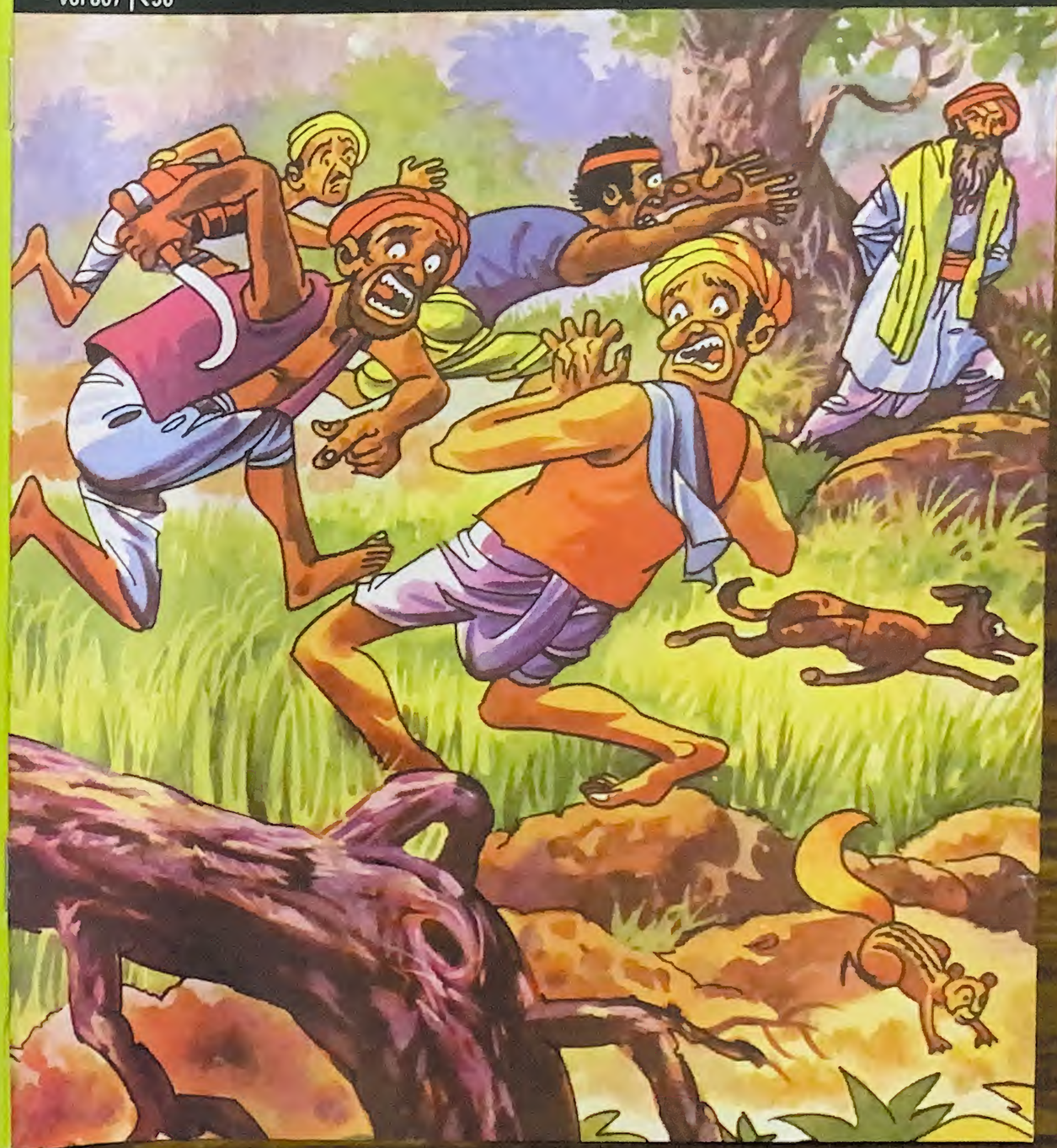
FABLES & HUMOUR

AMAR CHITRA KATHA

THE GREEN DEMON

A COLLECTION OF SUFI TALES

Vol 807 | ₹50



THE GREEN DEMON

A YOUNG MAN WANDERED INTO A FIELD WHERE A GROUP OF MEN WERE HARVESTING WHEAT.

. . . AND FLED FROM THE FIELD.

RUN, SIR! THERE IS A DEMON IN THE FIELD.

WHERE?

!!

SUDDENLY THE MEN STOPPED WORKING . . .

RIGHT THERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FIELD!

THE MAN RAN TO THE SPOT.

WHY, IT'S ONLY A WATER-MELON!

HE PULLED OUT A KNIFE FROM HIS WAISTBAND.

DON'T BE AFRAID. I'LL KILL YOUR DEMON FOR YOU.

HE CUT THE MELON OFF ITS STALK AND HELD IT IN ONE HAND.

THEN TO THE HORROR OF THE PEASANTS ...

...HE CUT OFF A SLICE...

...AND BITING INTO IT, WALKED TOWARDS THEM.

HE EATS DEMONS! HE'LL KILL AND EAT US NEXT.

WE WON'T GIVE HIM A CHANCE! LET'S DRIVE HIM AWAY. COME ON!

THE MEN WHO FEARED THE UNKNOWN FRUIT COULD BE QUITE DARING WHEN IT CAME TO ONE OF THEIR KIND.

?

THEY'RE MAD! STARK, STARING MAD!

AND HE FLED FROM THE SCENE.

WHEN THE NEXT HARVEST SEASON CAME ROUND, ANOTHER MELON WAS SPOTTED.

IT'S COME AGAIN! RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

WHAT ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY FROM, MY FRIENDS?

A DEMON, SIR.

A DEMON? WHERE?

IT'S COMING OUT OF THE EARTH IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR FIELD, SIR.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE IT TO ME?

IT HAS A LARGE, ROUND, GREEN HEAD AND...

...AND LONG, LONG ARMS, SIR.

ROUND GREEN HEAD...

ROUND, GREEN HEAD... LONG ARMS...

THE WISE MAN GUESSED THAT THEIR DEMON WAS ONLY A MELON...

...BUT HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE.

LET ME GO AND HAVE A LOOK AT IT.

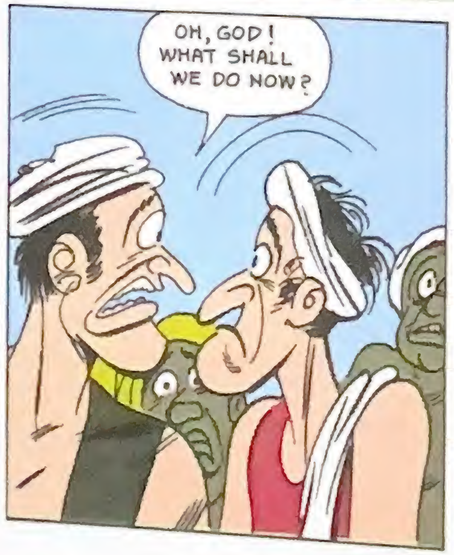
T-TAKE CARE, SIR.

HE TIP-TOED GINGERLY TOWARDS THE SPOT, WITH THE PEASANTS FOLLOWING AT A SAFE DISTANCE.

MY GUESS WAS RIGHT. BUT I WILL HAVE TO PRETEND THAT I AM TERRIFIED. THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO WIN THEIR CONFIDENCE.

E-EE-AH!

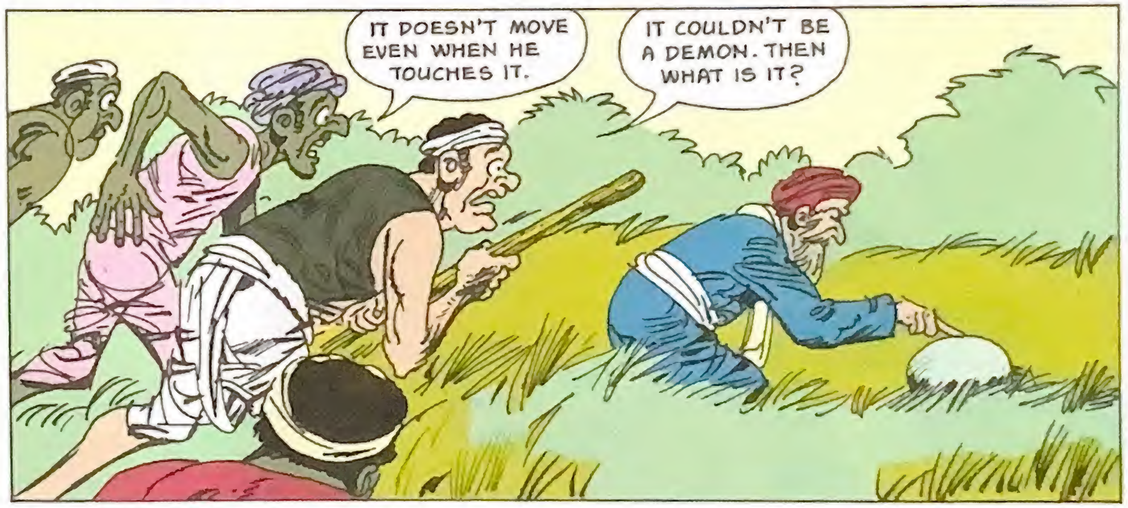
YOU ARE RIGHT. IT COULD BE VERY DANGEROUS.


OH, GOD! WHAT SHALL WE DO NOW?

WE WILL HAVE TO WATCH IT FOR A FEW DAYS AND THEN DECIDE.

FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS, HE DID NOTHING BUT OBSERVE THE MELON. THEN —
IT HAS NOT MOVED IN ALL THESE DAYS.

I AM GOING TO TOUCH IT TODAY.
BE CAREFUL, SIR.


IT DOESN'T MOVE EVEN WHEN HE TOUCHES IT.
IT COULDN'T BE A DEMON. THEN WHAT IS IT?

SOON, ONE BY ONE, THE PEASANTS CAME FORWARD AND TOUCHED THE MELON.
IT'S HARMLESS. ABSOLUTELY HARMLESS!

IT'S NOT A DEMON. BUT IF IT'S NOT A DEMON, WHY HAS IT COME HERE?
IT HAS NOT COME HERE.

IT HAS GROWN HERE. LIKE THOSE WHEAT PLANTS.

GROWN? LIKE WHEAT?

BUT WHEAT GROWS FROM SEEDS. WHERE ARE THE SEEDS?

THE MAN PULLED OUT HIS KNIFE AND CUT THE MELON IN HALF.

HERE! THESE ARE THE SEEDS. IF WE PLANT THEM THEY WILL GROW AND PRODUCE FRUIT.

BUT HOW DID THIS FRUIT COME INTO OUR FIELD? WE DIDN'T PLANT ANY SEEDS.

ONE OF THEM MUST HAVE COME WITH THE BAG OF WHEAT YOU SOWED.

OH! LET'S PLANT SOME OF THESE SEEDS, SIR.

THEY DRIED A FEW SEEDS AND PLANTED THEM.

THEY PATIENTLY WATCHED THE SEEDS SPROUT AND GROW.

AT LAST, ONE DAY—

LOOK! THEY HAVE BECOME AS LARGE AS OUR DEMON!

YOUR DEMON HAS A NAME. IT IS CALLED A WATER-MELON.

AND IT CAN SAFELY BE EATEN.

HE CUT OFF A SLICE AND BIT INTO IT.

SEE? IT IS DELICIOUS!

LET ME TASTE IT TOO, SIR.

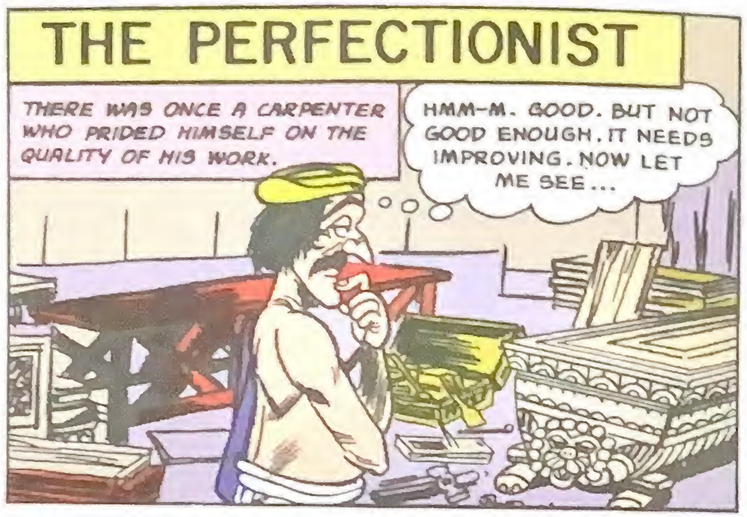
SOON—

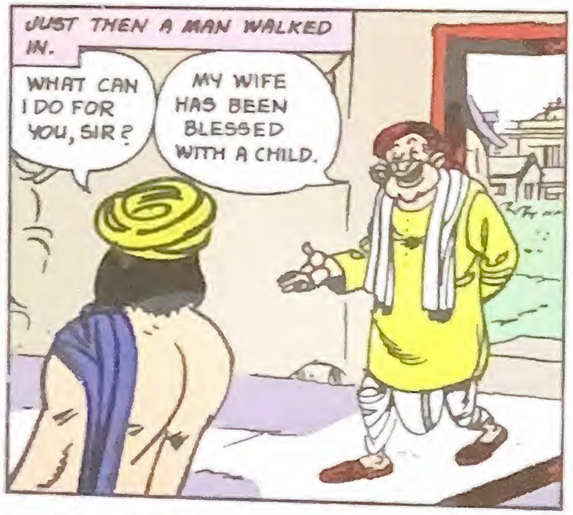
HOW CLEVER WE ARE! WE HAVE DISCOVERED SOMETHING NEW TO EAT!

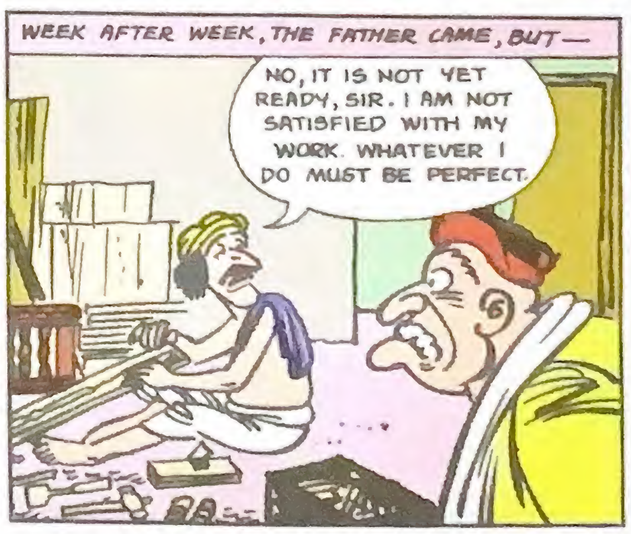
SOMETHING TASTIER THAN ANYTHING WE'VE EATEN SO FAR!

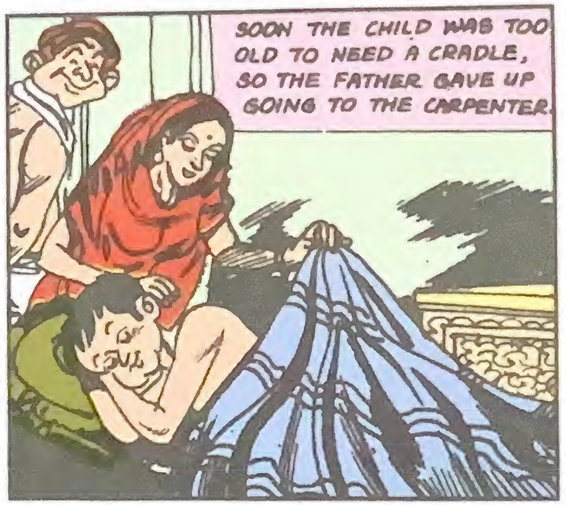
HAD THE FIRST MAN USED THE SECOND MAN'S APPROACH, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN THE ACHIEVER OF THIS MIRACLE.

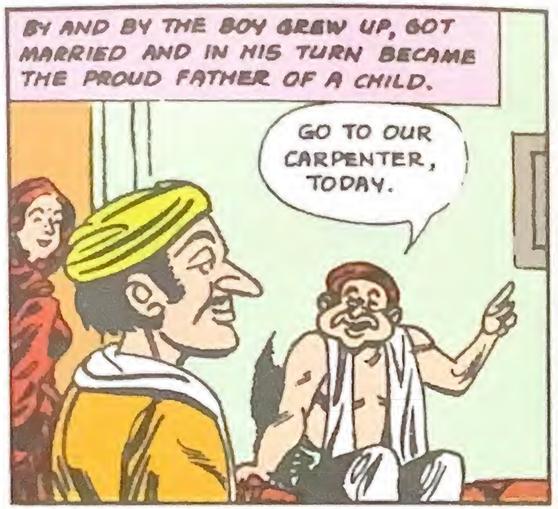
THE PERFECTIONIST

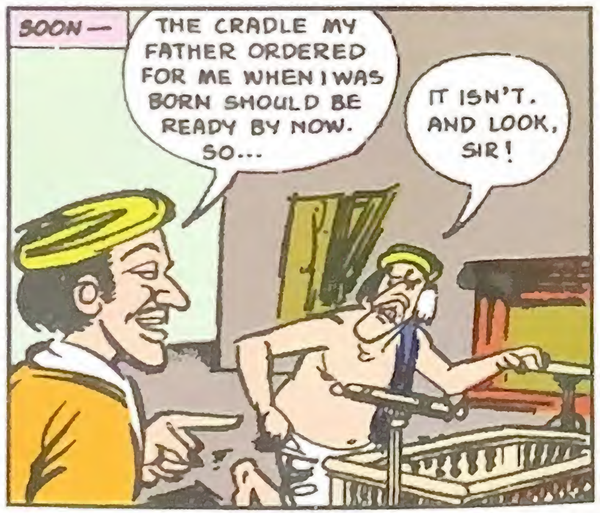


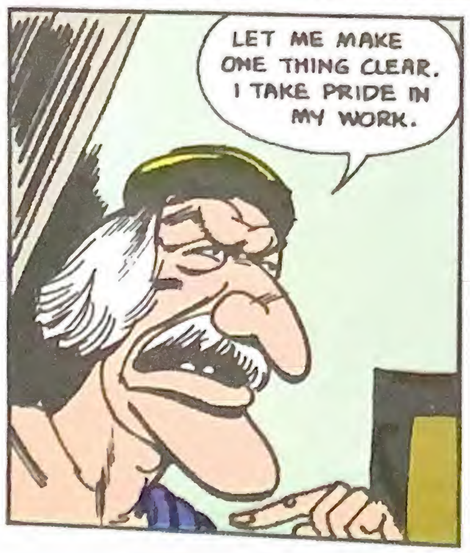




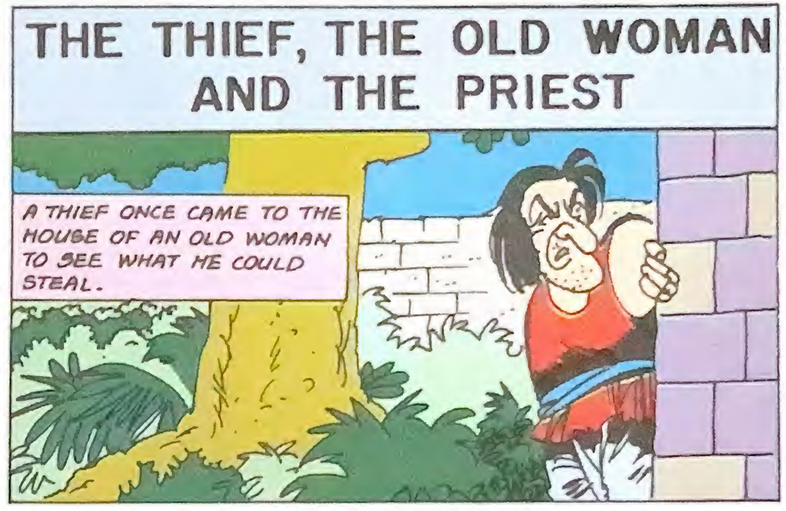


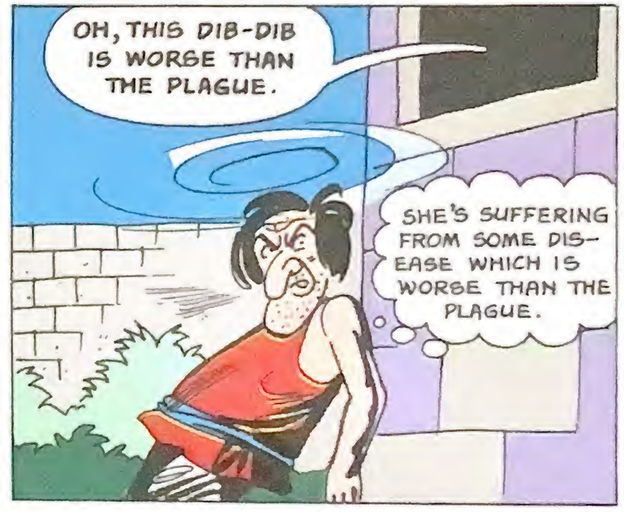






THE THIEF, THE OLD WOMAN AND THE PRIEST



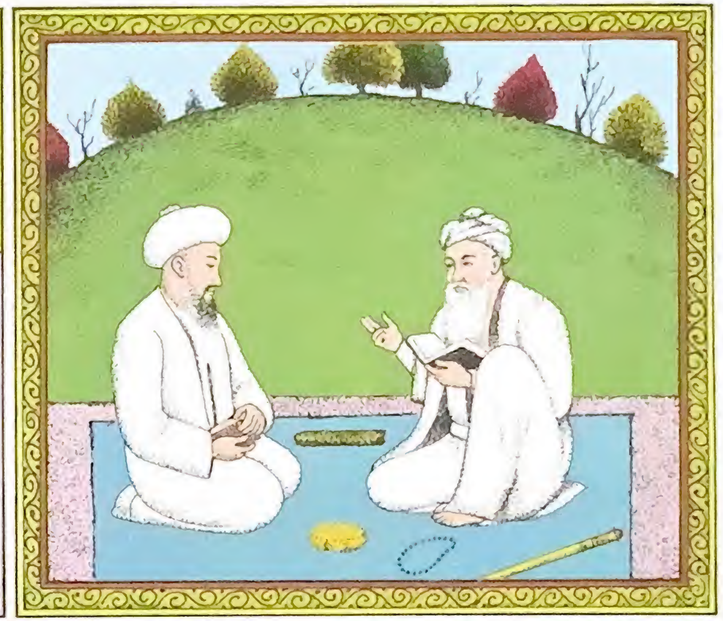


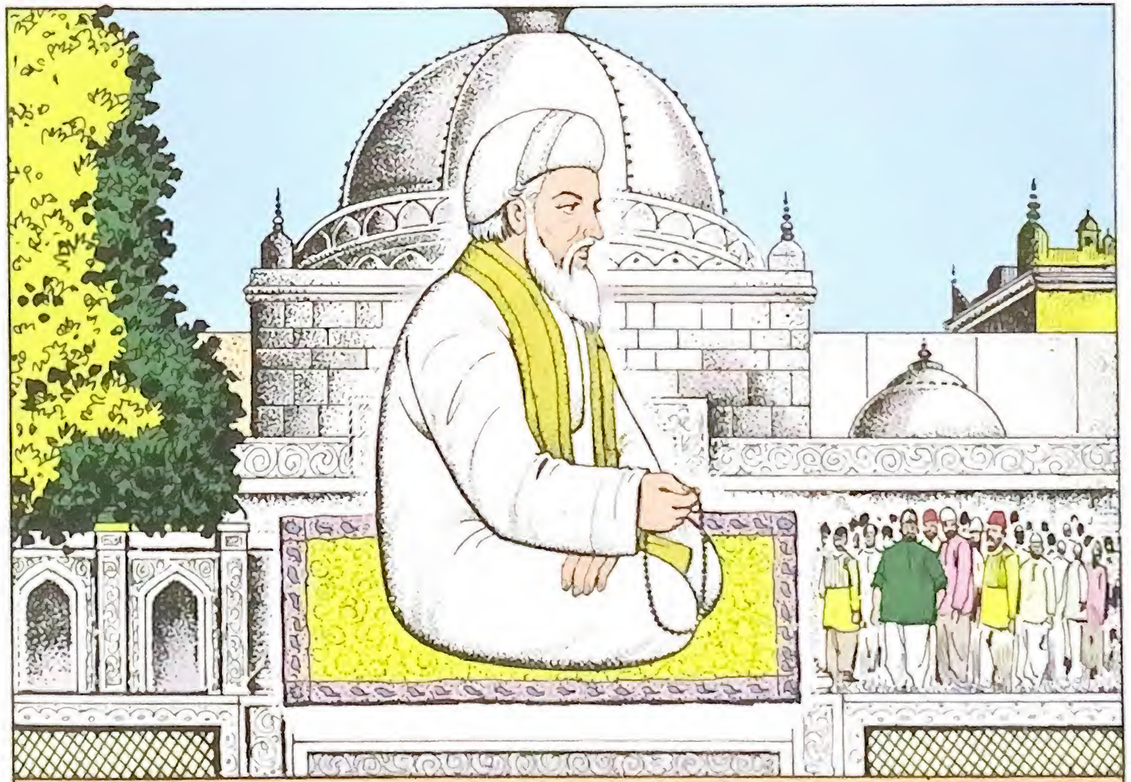
CONTD. ON PAGE 19

SUFI SAINTS OF INDIA

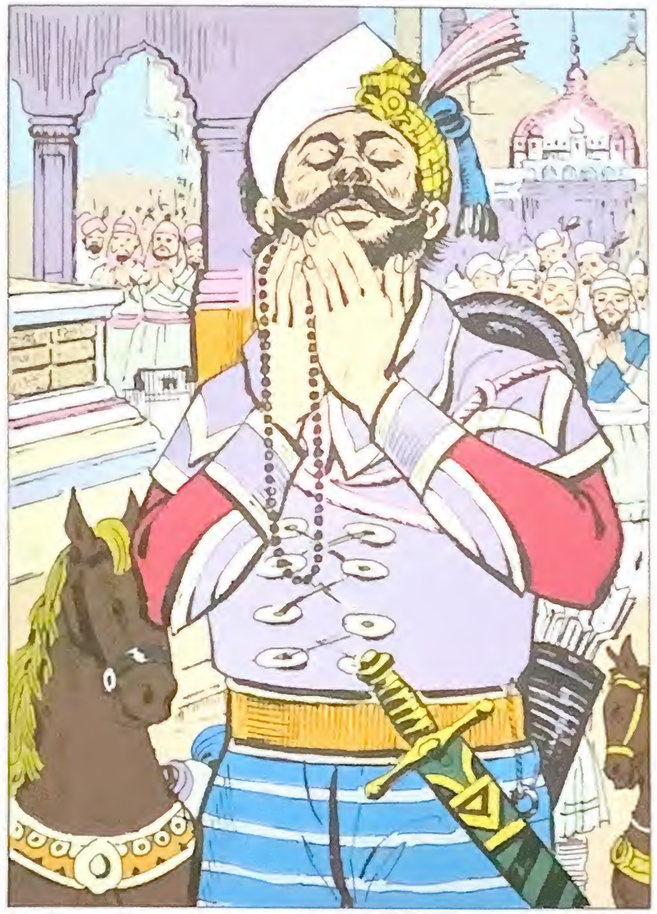
Script : Swarn Khandpur
Illustrations S.K. Parab

THE SUFIS WERE SAINTS OR MYSTICS OF PERSIA WHO FORMED THEMSELVES INTO SEVERAL ORDERS AND SPREAD OUT TO DISTANT LANDS. SOME OF THEM LIVED AS HOUSEHOLDERS.





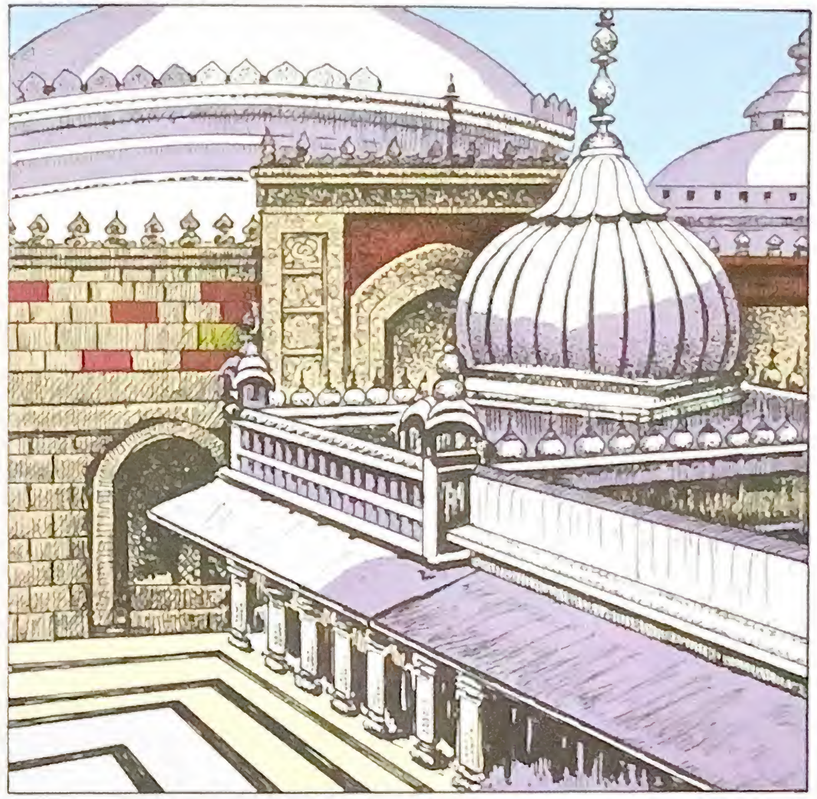
KHWAJA MUINUDDIN OF THE CHISHTI ORDER CAME TO INDIA IN THE 12TH CENTURY AND SETTLED DOWN AT AJMER. HIS PIETY AND HUMILITY ENDEARED HIM TO HINDUS AND MUSLIMS ALIKE. THEY AFFECTIONATELY CALLED HIM GARIB NAWAZ, (ONE WHO CHERISHES THE HUMBLE). HIS TOMB HAS BECOME A PLACE OF PILGRIMAGE FOR HIS FOLLOWING ALL OVER THE WORLD.

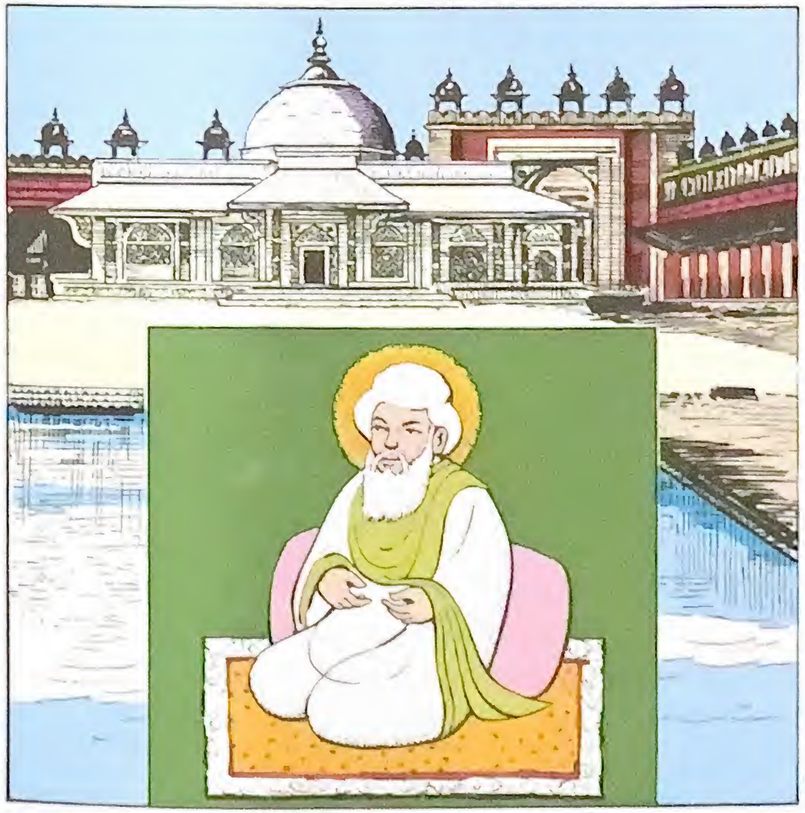


AFTER HIS SACK OF DELHI IN 1398, TIMUR WAS RETURNING HOME TO SAMARKAND, LADEN WITH GOLD AND RICHES. SUDDENLY AT A PLACE IN PUNJAB, THE CARAVAN STOPPED.
THE HORSES REFUSED TO MOVE. TIMUR BECAME FURIOUS. WHEN TOLD THAT THE PLACE WAS SANCTIFIED, TIMUR ROARED,
"BY WHOM?"
A VOICE ANSWERED:
"BABA FARID, THE KING OF KINGS."
TIMUR, THE STORY GOES, BOWED TO THE MEMORY OF THE SAINT AND SPENT THE NIGHT AT THE DURGAH (TOMB) OF BABA FARID.

BABA FARID THE MYSTIC WAS POPULARLY KNOWN AS GANJ-SHAKAR (TREASURER OF SWEETNESS). IT IS SAID THAT AS A CHILD HE WOULD GET SOME SUGAR FROM HIS MOTHER AFTER EVERY PRAYER. ONE DAY SHE FORGOT TO PUT IT UNDER THE PRAYER MAT. BUT BY SOME DIVINE POWER, SUGAR DID APPEAR WHEN FARID TURNED TO TAKE HIS REWARD! HIS HYMNS ARE INCLUDED IN THE GRANTH SAHIB, THE HOLY BOOK OF THE SIKHS. "DO NOT GIVE ME SCISSORS," HE WOULD SAY. "GIVE ME A NEEDLE. I SEW, I DO NOT CUT."

ANOTHER GREAT SUFI WAS NIZAMUDDIN AULIYA WHO SETTLED IN DELHI AND SPENT HIS LIFE IN THE SERVICE OF GOD AND HIS CREATURES. AROUND HIS TOMB HAS GROWN A SETTLEMENT POPULARLY REFERRED TO AS "SUFI BASTI".





SHEIKH SALIM CHISHTI, A SUFI SAINT OF EMPEROR AKBAR'S TIME, HAD SETTLED DOWN AT SIKRI NEAR AGRA. IT WAS WITH HIS BLESSINGS THAT A SON WAS AT LAST BORN TO AKBAR. THE CHILD, NAMED SALIM AFTER THE SAINT, LATER BECAME EMPEROR JAHANGIR.
AKBAR BUILT A MARBLE TOMB FOR THE SAINT AT FATEHPUR SIKRI.

TINKLE

Antics, adventures, experiences and great storytelling!

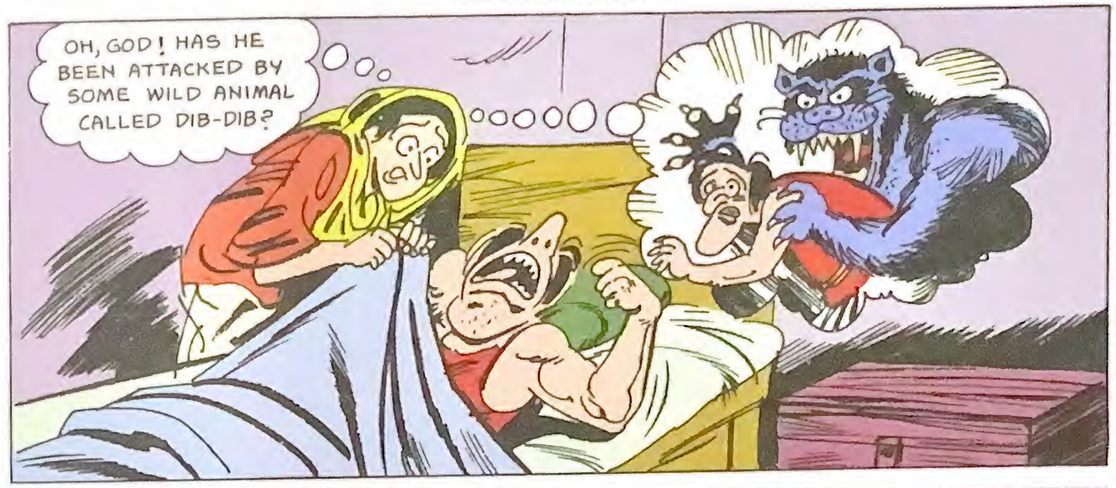
Ever had that feeling that the Defective Detective should have more mishaps in a story?

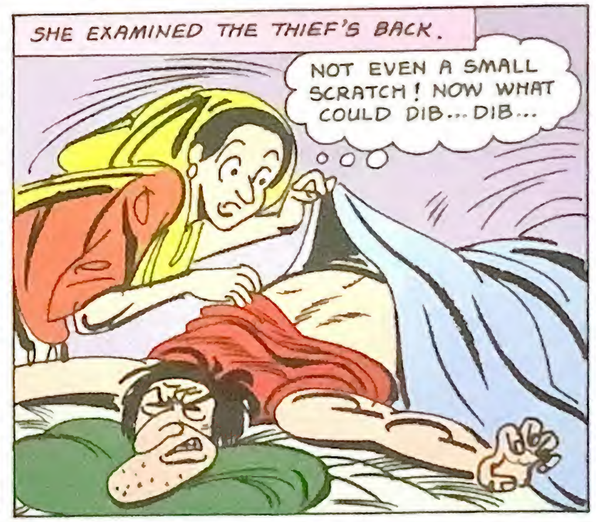
Or that Shikari Shambu's exciting rendezvous with animals should last longer?

Or you had more stories of Suppandi's misadventure to read about and be thoroughly entertained?

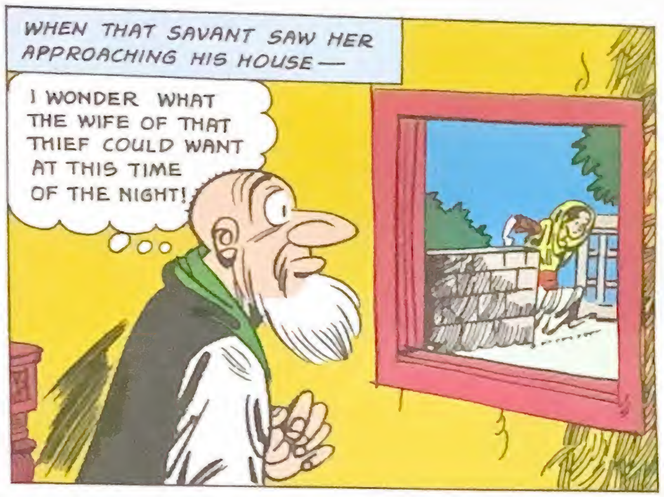
Your wish has now come true with the special
Tinkle Collection – where every comic is individually
dedicated to your favourite Tinkle characters!

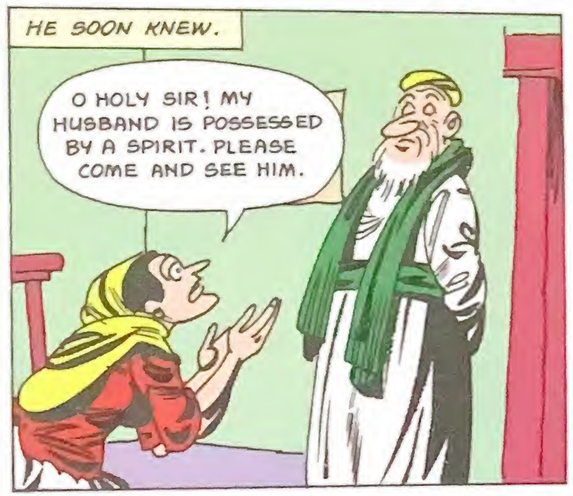
To buy this product, visit your nearest bookstore
or buy online at **www.amarchitrakatha.com** or call **022-40497417/31/35/36**





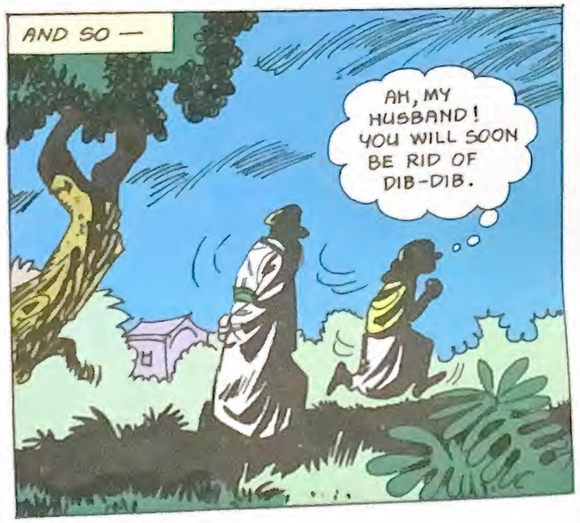
SHE RAN ALL THE WAY TO THE HOUSE OF THE LOCAL PRIEST.


WHEN THAT SAVANT SAW HER APPROACHING HIS HOUSE—
I WONDER WHAT THE WIFE OF THAT THIEF COULD WANT AT THIS TIME OF THE NIGHT!


HE SOON KNEW.
O HOLY SIR! MY HUSBAND IS POSSESSED BY A SPIRIT. PLEASE COME AND SEE HIM.

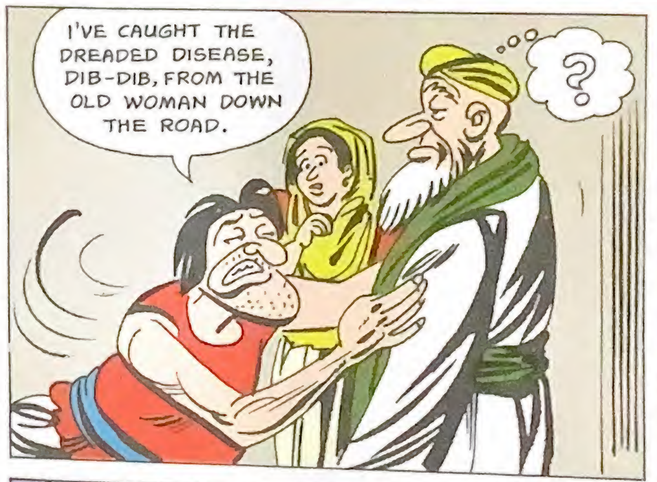
THIS IS WHAT I'M HERE FOR, AREN'T I? WHATEVER THE HOUR, I MUST GO.
DON'T ASK ME TO WAIT TILL MORNING, SIR.

IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE.
DID I SAY I WOULDN'T COME? LEAD ME TO YOUR HOUSE!


AND SO —
AH, MY HUSBAND! YOU WILL SOON BE RID OF DIB-DIB.

WHEN THE THIEF SAW THE PRIEST—
THE PRIEST! IT'S WORSE THAN I SUSPECTED... MY END HAS COME...

HOLY SIR! SAVE MY LIFE! PLEASE SAVE MY LIFE!


I'VE CAUGHT THE DREADED DISEASE, DIB-DIB, FROM THE OLD WOMAN DOWN THE ROAD.
?

SHE SPOKE OF A SPIRIT. HE SPEAKS OF A DISEASE. WHAT AM I TO MAKE OF IT?

WHY ARE YOU SILENT? WON'T YOU SAY SOMETHING, SIR?
I'LL SAY A FEW WORDS TO HIM, AND THEN LOOK INTO THE MATTER.

SON, REPENT AND BEG FOR MERCY. THE HOURS LEFT ON EARTH FOR YOU MAY BE VERY FEW.
NO! NO!
THE PRIEST THEN LEFT THE THIEF'S HOUSE...

...AND CAME TO THAT OF THE OLD WOMAN.

OH DIB-DIB, YOU'LL BE THE DEATH OF ME.

WHAT'S THAT?

YOU'RE KILLING ME, DIB-DIB. YOU MERCILESS DIB-DIB...

SUDDENLY THE PRIEST BEGAN TO SHIVER.

DISEASE OR SPIRIT... IT'S GOT ME TOO... MY BODY AND MY SOUL...

AND AS HE SHIVERED, THE WINDOW FRAME RATTLED.

NOW WHAT'S THAT?

HANDS! A THIEF!

GOT YOU!

SHE WAS SHOCKED TO SEE WHO IT WAS.

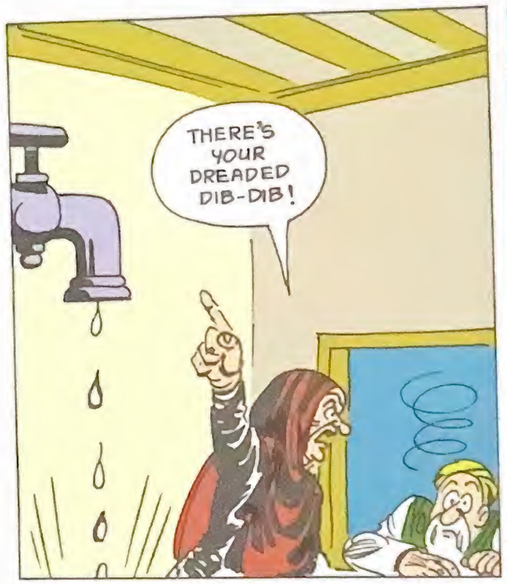
YOU! FOR SHAME!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUTSIDE MY WINDOW AT THIS TIME OF THE NIGHT?

Y-YOUR DIB-DIB HAS ME, TOO, IN ITS GRIP... BOTH MY BODY AND MY SOUL ... MY DAYS ARE N-NUMBERED...

OH, YOU FOOL! YOU HEAR ME WAIL ABOUT DIB-DIB AND YOU IMAGINE ALL SORTS OF THINGS. **PAH!**

AND TO THINK I REVERED YOU ALL THESE YEARS! **PAH!** IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT DIB-DIB REALLY IS, STOP THAT SHIVERING AND LOOK IN HERE.

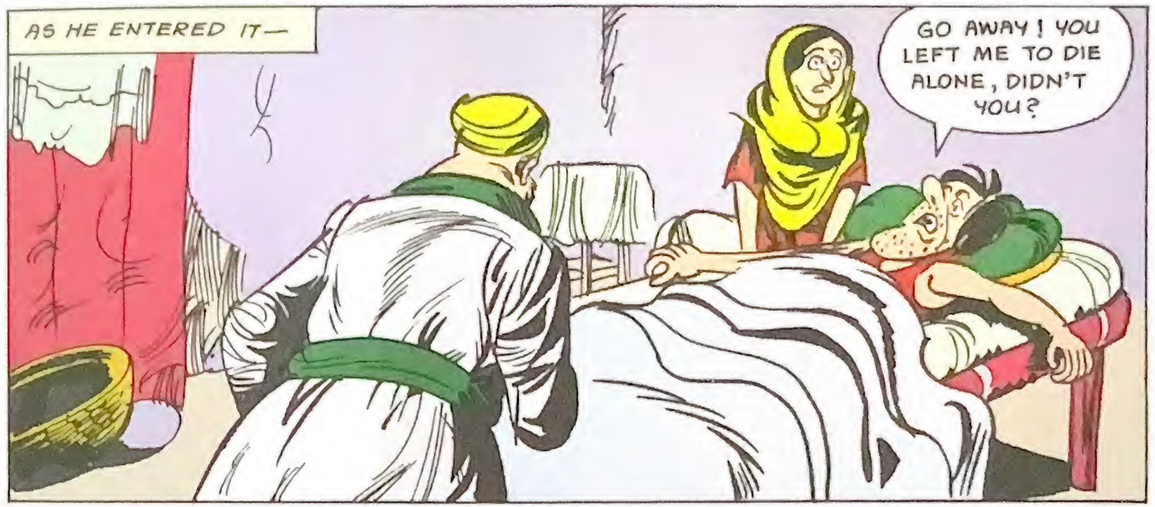

THERE'S YOUR DREADED DIB-DIB!

THANK GOD, IT WAS ONLY THAT AND NOTHING WORSE!

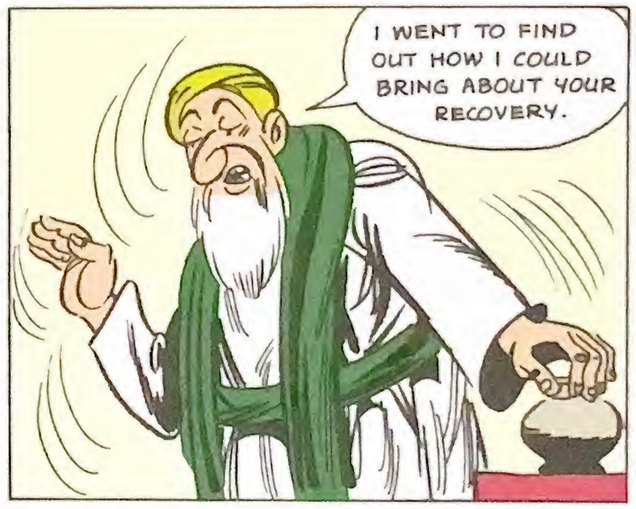
I'LL BE DISCREET ABOUT YOUR FOLLY, SO DON'T WORRY.

I MUST BE GOING NOW. I HAVE WORK TO DO.
A MOMENT, SIR. ONE GOOD TURN DESERVES ANOTHER, YOU'LL AGREE. SO...

...IF EVER I NEED YOUR HELP...
TO BE SURE! TO BE SURE!
AND THE PRIEST HURRIED TOWARDS THE THIEF'S HOUSE.


AS HE ENTERED IT—
GO AWAY! YOU LEFT ME TO DIE ALONE, DIDN'T YOU?

NOW, NOW! DO YOU THINK A MAN AS PIOUS AND LEARNED AS I WOULD DO THAT?


I WENT TO FIND OUT HOW I COULD BRING ABOUT YOUR RECOVERY.

!

DID YOU SAY RECOVERY?

THE PRIEST MUMBLED SOME WORDS OVER THE WATER IN HIS HAND.

NOW PROMISE ME YOU WILL NEVER AGAIN STEAL.

I PROMISE!

AWAY, DIB-DIB! I SAID AWAY!

DON'T DARE RETURN AND TORMENT THIS MAN AGAIN!

I'M CURED! I'M CURED!

AFTER THAT, THE THIEF, OF COURSE, KEPT HIS PROMISE. THE PRIEST CONTINUED TO BE RESPECTED AS THE HOLY MAN OF THE PLACE. AS FOR THE OLD WOMAN, SHE COULD NOT FOR THE LIFE OF HER FIND AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE USE OF THE PRIEST.

THE IMMATURE CRITIC

A VENERABLE OLD MAN WAS WALKING DOWN A STREET, LOST IN HIS OWN THOUGHTS...

...WHEN A YOUNG MAN CAME BY.

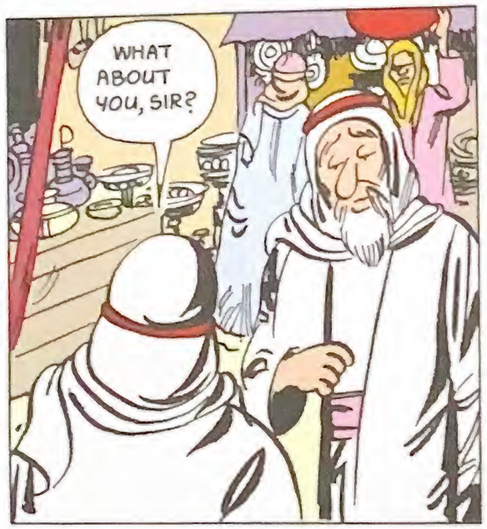
SIR! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE SUFI MASTERS, SIR?

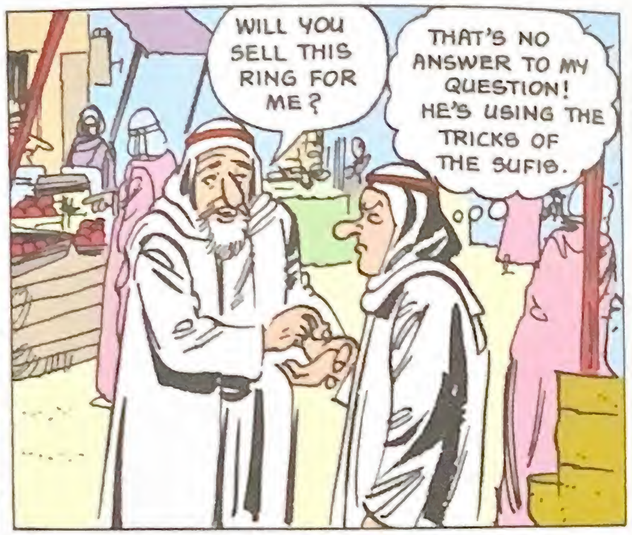
UH?

THE SUFI MASTERS, SIR. I HAVE NO RESPECT FOR THEM. I THINK THEY ACT MYSTERIOUS AND SPEAK IN RIDDLES BECAUSE...

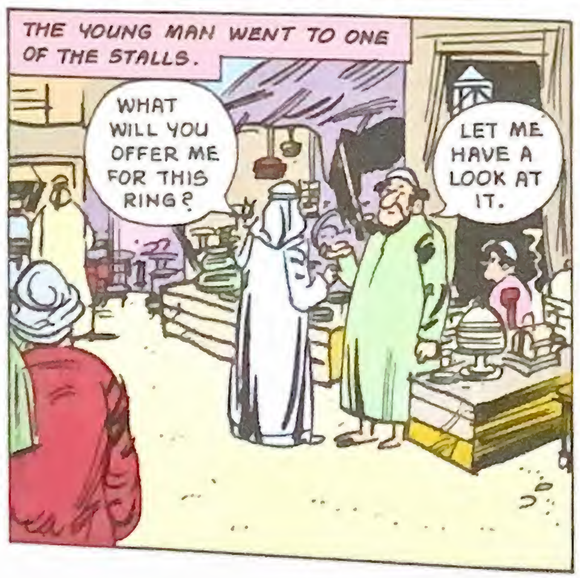
...BECAUSE THEY WANT TO CONFUSE US. BUT THEY WILL NEVER SUCCEED.

I PERSONALLY HAVE NO FAITH WHATSOEVER IN THEIR WISDOM. THEIR IDEAS ARE ALL WRONG.


WHAT ABOUT YOU, SIR?


WILL YOU SELL THIS RING FOR ME?
THAT'S NO ANSWER TO MY QUESTION! HE'S USING THE TRICKS OF THE SUFIS.

ONE OF THOSE MEN MIGHT BUY IT. TRY TO GET AT LEAST ONE PIECE OF GOLD FOR IT.
I KNOW YOUR TRICKS, OLD MAN. ANYWAY, I'LL HUMOUR YOU FOR THE MOMENT.

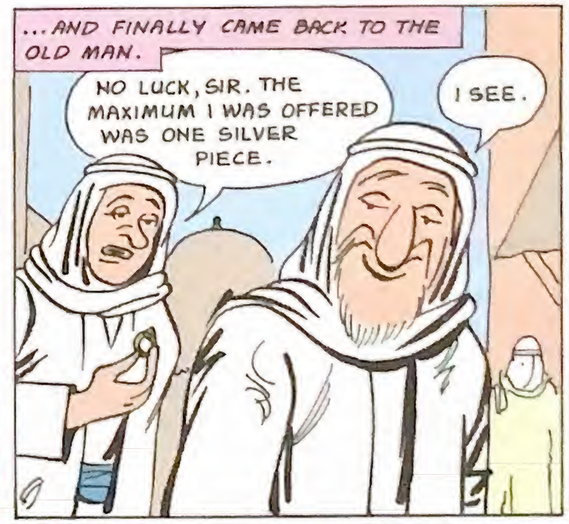

THE YOUNG MAN WENT TO ONE OF THE STALLS.
WHAT WILL YOU OFFER ME FOR THIS RING?
LET ME HAVE A LOOK AT IT.

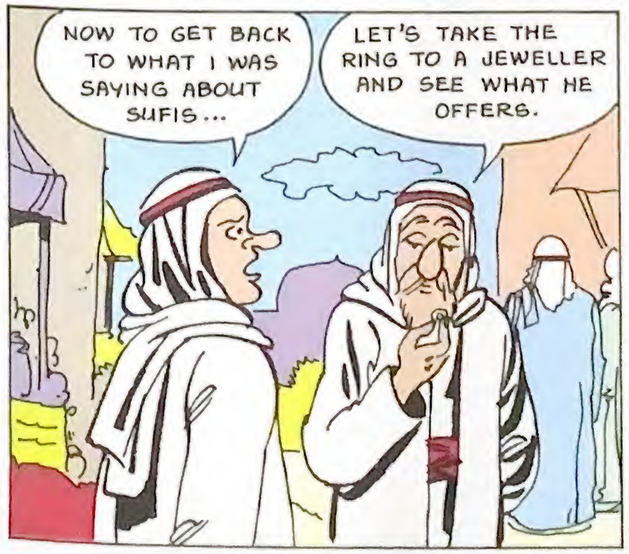
IT'S BEAUTIFUL, FATHER! PLEASE BUY IT FOR ME!

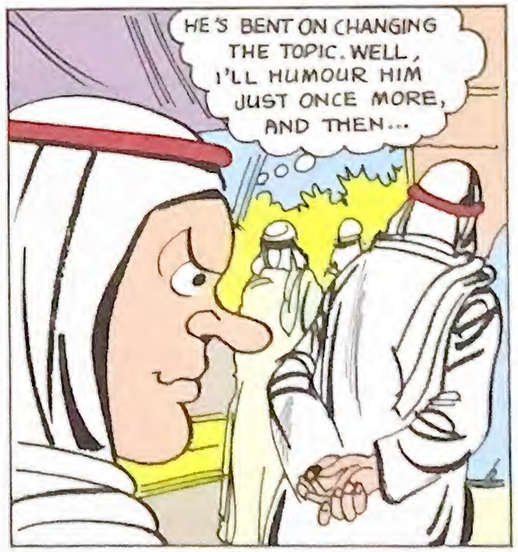
HM..M! I'LL GIVE YOU...
YES?

ONE SILVER COIN. AND THAT'S MORE THAN THIS RING IS WORTH!
I SHOULD HAVE NAMED THE PRICE.
THE YOUNG MAN TOOK BACK THE RING...

...WENT TO THE NEXT STALL AND THIS TIME NAMED HIS PRICE.
A WHOLE GOLD PIECE FOR THIS BAUBLE! ARE YOU A CHEAT OR A FOOL?
THE YOUNG MAN VISITED ALL THE STALLS, ONE BY ONE...


...AND FINALLY CAME BACK TO THE OLD MAN.
NO LUCK, SIR. THE MAXIMUM I WAS OFFERED WAS ONE SILVER PIECE.
I SEE.


NOW TO GET BACK TO WHAT I WAS SAYING ABOUT SUFIS...
LET'S TAKE THE RING TO A JEWELLER AND SEE WHAT HE OFFERS.


HE'S BENT ON CHANGING THE TOPIC. WELL, I'LL HUMOUR HIM JUST ONCE MORE, AND THEN...

SOON—

SIR, I WOULD LIKE TO SELL THIS GEM. COULD YOU VALUE IT FOR ME?

IT'S WORTH A THOUSAND PIECES OF GOLD.

WHAT!

I WOULD LIKE TO BUY IT MYSELF.

THANK YOU, SIR. I'LL CONSIDER YOUR OFFER.

AND HE LEFT THE SHOP, FOLLOWED BY THE YOUNG MAN.

LATER—

WHAT YOU KNOW OF SUFIS IS ABOUT AS MUCH AS THOSE TRINKET-SELLERS KNOW OF PRECIOUS STONES.

IF YOU WISH TO VALUE GEMS, MY SON, FIRST BECOME A JEWELLER.

THE VENERABLE OLD MAN WAS NONE OTHER THAN THE SUFI SAGE— DHUN-NUN.

SWEET OR SOUR

THE OWNER OF AN ORCHARD APPOINTED A MAN TO TEND HIS POMEGRANATE TREES.

A FEW MONTHS LATER, AS HE WAS WALKING THROUGH HIS ORCHARD—

I'M THIRSTY. GIVE ME ONE OF THOSE POMEGRANATES.

THE MAN PLUCKED A FRUIT AND GAVE IT TO HIM.

HERE YOU ARE, SIR.

WHEN THE OWNER BEGAN TO EAT IT—

UGH! IT'S SOUR. GIVE ME ANOTHER.

BUT THE NEXT ONE WAS EVEN MORE SOUR.

AFTER TASTING AND REJECTING SEVERAL, THE OWNER LOST HIS TEMPER.

YOU HAVE BEEN WORKING HERE FOR MONTHS NOW. CAN'T YOU TELL WHICH OF THE POMEGRANATES IS SWEET!

I AM SORRY, SIR. I WAS APPOINTED TO TEND THE TREES, SIR... NOT TASTE THE FRUIT!

!